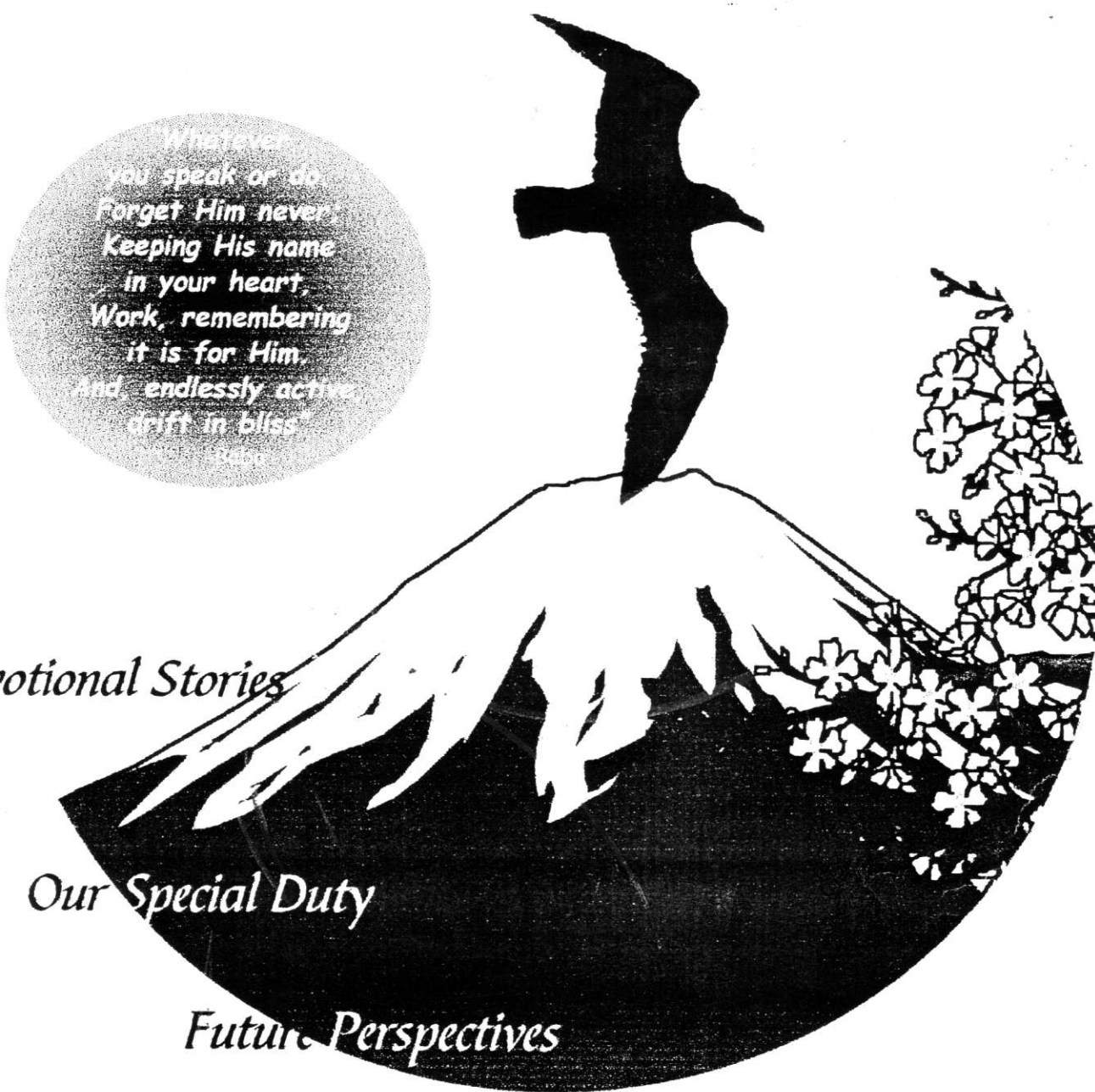


# Pranam

ANANDA MARGA SUVA SECTORIAL NEWSLETTER - January 1999



Whatever  
you speak or do,  
Forget Him never,  
Keeping His name  
in your heart,  
Work, remembering  
it is for Him,  
And, endlessly active,  
drift in bliss.

*Devotional Stories*

*Our Special Duty*

*Future Perspectives*

*Secrets to Better Sadhana*

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## Ananda Vanii

**T**he uttam (best) category of people are those who take up a task and are determined to fulfil it. They go on struggling against all odds till they achieve their goal. No problem can defy solution. No difficulty can be greater than their capacity to solve it. They go on fighting against all obstacles. They can face any challenge and meet any predicament. They are determined to achieve their objective, come what may.

I want you to be persons of the best category. You must always think of the goal. Always look to your ideal. By spiritual ideation you can get inspiration to adhere to your principles.

-Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiji.

## Supreme Command

**T**hose who perform sadhana twice a day regularly, the thought of Parama Parusa will certainly arise in their mind at the time of death. Their Liberation is a sure guarantee. Therefore every Ananda Margi will have to perform sadhana atleast twice a day invariably. Verily is this the command of the Lord. Without Yama and Niyama, sadhana is an impossibility. Hence the Lord's command is also to follow Yama and Niyama. Disobedience to this command is nothing to throw oneself into the tortures of lives for crores of years. That no one should undergo the torments such as these, that everyone might be able to enjoy the eternal blessedness under the loving shelter of the Lord, it is the bounden duty of every Ananda Margii to endeavour to bring all to the path of bliss. Verily is this a part and parcel of sadhana to lead others along the path of righteousness.

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

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# Our Special Duty

One is mistaken if one thinks that liberation can be obtained without effort. One must deserve kindness and then alone will it be bestowed. It is never showered on an undeserving disciple. To deserve the grace of Sadguru one has to follow the system of intuitional practice with devotion and faith and not assume that the great preceptor will freely give everything without any effort on the part of the disciple. Other people think that, since they are the disciples of a great preceptor and since Sadguru has come to elevate the fallen, the preceptor will take them all along when leaving in the same way as a cow herd gathers together all grazing cattle before leaving the pasture land at dusk. This way of thinking is not correct. A great preceptor does not come into this world to herd disciples like cattle. The great preceptor comes to liberate people, to elevate them to divinity. People must make sincere effort to carry intuitional practice (Sa'dhana'). Idle dependence on the preceptor cannot obtain emancipation.

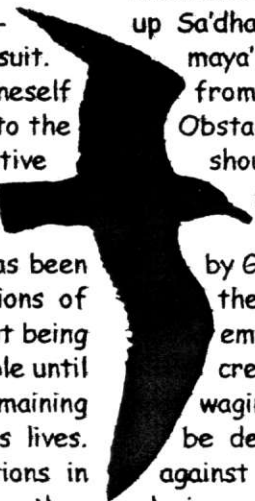
When one starts intuitional practice, problems arise and present obstacles to its pursuit. Spiritual practice is the effort to free oneself from subjugation which is maintained due to the bondage of Prakrti (the Cosmic Creative Force). In order to obtain liberation the mind has to be restored to its natural state by removing these distortions. It has been shown earlier that these are the reactions of one's action and cannot be removed without being experienced. So emancipation is not possible until one has completely experienced the remaining reactions of all actions of one's previous lives. Ordinary people experience these reactions in the normal way and if any still remain when they die, they are reborn to exhaust them. Those who pursue intuitional practice do not want to be born again to experience their remaining reactions. In their eagerness to attain emancipation quickly they hasten to exhaust the balance of reactions in this life. So they should regard problems as a good sign, as they speed up the exhaustion of the remaining reactions.

Sa'dhana' is the effort to free oneself from the qualifying influence of Prakrti. Avidya'ma'ya' is also a quality and that too has to be renounced. If

a tenant has been occupying a house for a very long time it will be extremely difficult to suddenly evict him by force particularly if he has been treated as a respectable tenant for a long time. He will never leave the house willingly and will place all sorts of obstacles in your path. You will have to fight against all his manoeuvres and only when you have completely defeated him, will the bully allow you to enter house. Similarly, as one has been at the mercy of Avidya'maya' for many lives it will not leave easily when one starts intuition practice. Like the bullying tenant, Avidya'ma'ya' will also throw all possible obstacles in one's path when one tries to destroy its influence. Sa'dhana' or intuitional practice as taught by a great preceptor is the way to remove Avidya'ma'ya' [animal instincts like fear, lust, anger, greed, pride, attachment, aversion etc.-ed]

Sa'dhana' can make Avidya'ma'ya' lose its hold. So the beginning of true Sa'dhana' is marked by great resistance from Avidyamaya which, through the obstacles she creates, tries to compel one to give up Sa'dhana'. In its attempts to subdue Avidya'maya', Sa'dhana' will naturally meet resistance from the evil force of Avidya'ma'ya'. Obstacles in Sa'dhana' (intuitional practices) should be regarded as an indication of one's success in one's attempts to remove Avidya'ma'ya'. Obstacles are not created by God or the great preceptor (Sadguru), as they wish every one of the units to become emancipated like themselves. They are created by Prakrti against whom one is waging war. If one is to gain, Prakrti has to be defeated with the weapon of Sa'dhana' against which Avidya'ma'ya' defends itself by placing obstacles in one's way. Obstacles in Sa'dhana' should be regarded as good sign, indicating that the influence of Avidya'maya' is beginning to wane.

The Qualified Supreme Entity (Sagun'a Brahma) has given each of Its units a fully reflected unit consciousness. It manifests creation and evolves humanity in it to enable the unit to carry on intuitional practice and attain emancipation. Other living beings do not possess a fully reflected consciousness and are neither capable of performing Sa'dhana' nor of attaining emancipation. Unit con-



sciousness is fully reflected in all human beings and thus everyone has an equal right to practice Sa'dhana'. No other living being till they are evolved to the stage of human beings has the capacity to perform intuitional practice.

As everyone has an equal right to do Sa'dhana', it is necessary for Sagun'a Brahma (Qualified Supreme Entity) to reach

ness. They can discriminate between good and evil and choose to live a good life.

The desire for emancipation is good but as every action or desire has to have a cause, so this desire also has to be aroused, within human beings. Developing an earnest desire for emancipation or earning the right to do Sa'dhana', therefore depends on one's efforts. The



everyone as a great preceptor. But this does not happen because due to people's lack of interest in achieving emancipation, they are not able to claim their right to Sa'dhana'. The great preceptor is available only to those who have an earnest desire for emancipation. For them only the opportune moment has arrived and they alone can claim their right to Sa'dhana' and find a great preceptor (Sadguru).

Human beings have the power of discrimination as they possess a fully reflected unit conscious-

great preceptor cannot be accused of partiality because of teaching intuitional practice only to those who really deserve it.

Sagun'a Brahma wants to liberate everyone but one must earn the right to do Sa'dhana' by one's own efforts as, although all human beings have a fully reflected consciousness many are not able to develop the earnest desire for emancipation. God cannot be blamed for human indifference towards attaining emancipation, which prevents one from finding a

great preceptor. It is everyone's duty (Dharma) to create the desire for emancipation as that is the wish of the Lord and that is why the Lord made the vast creation.

The aim of Sagun'a Brahma is to liberate each of His units and that is the only reason why He made this vast creation. Everyone will gain emancipation sooner or later as that is the wish of the Lord. It may happen soon or may come about after an indefinite period. The only way to gain emancipation is through Sa'dhana' and so everyone will have to begin Sa'dhana' one day in their search for liberation from the bondage of creation.

The wise should therefore start Sa'dhana' as soon as possible and gain emancipation quickly. They realize that to delay is to suffer unnecessarily under the bondage of creation which is not their permanent home. To regard a transit camp as one's home and suffer the rigours and difficulties of the camp is foolish. Knowing that this is not the final goal and that one has no right to stay here permanently, it seems sensible to make an effort to leave as soon as possible. Everyone has to reach his/her goal sometime. It is imperative for everyone to achieve emancipation quickly by practicing Sa'dhana'. This is our permanent duty.

*It is a fact that the force of Avidya (maya) disturbs a soul much more than it disturbs an ordinary person. Various situations arise in life such as material difficulties, family unrest, abundant wealth, tremendous reputation, acute financial distress or extreme humiliation. Sadhakas will have to bravely confront these mundane situations as a test. They must never think in terms of retreat - it would be fatal, for the Avidya force would stab them as soon as their backs were turned."*



# My Last Days With You

by Manorainjana

## 'Har'gela madhupur hama kulabala'

Where is Hari? He is in Madhupur. Madhupur means Sahasrara Cakra.

In Vaesnava Tantra, Sahasrara is Madhupur. From Madupur: Madhu-ura, Madhura, and Mathura have been derived. So this is Mathura and not the town of western U.P. It is here (i.e. the Sahasrara Cakra or Pineal gland).

Kulakundalinii is known as Radha. Hari resides in the Sahasrara Cakra and Kulakundalinii resides in Kula, i.e. the last bone. Kulabala here does not mean any girl, but it is this kulakundalinii and not Kulasya Bala (a girl of a family). Vidyapati Thakur has said:

Nayanak niinda gail ... sukha gail piya sanga dukha mera pasa.

Hari lives very far, Paramapurusa or Parama Shiva is very, very far. Jiiiva Bhava (Kulakundalinii) is far below the lowest most point. That is why it has no sleep, no happiness. There is only sorrow - pain and sorrow.

When will this sorrow come to an end? When the Jiiiva Bhava will merge in the Shiva Bhava. This is the ultimate end of Sadhana, the sweetest end. The separate existence of the individual is lost. The real thing must be known.

This sorrow in philosophy is known as spiritual sorrow. The Jiiiva has three types of sorrows: Adhibhaotika, Adhidaevika and Adhya tmika. Adhibhaotika sorrow is mundane, i.e. of hunger, thirst or of the physical level. If we change the structure of society the misery will end. We will have to do it, as it is essential to do it. Adhidaevika sorrow is a mental one. If we prepare our minds by Sadhana, all the mental agony, cares, and worries will come to an end.

The spiritual sorrow is that Hari or Krsna is far off, away from me, who is my closest. He is in the Sahasrara Cakra (Pineal Gland) and the sleeping dormant force is on the lowest Muladhara Cakra, and this distance, this is Adhyatmika sorrow. This can be eliminated by spiritual Sadhana, i.e. Dhyana, Dharana, Pranayama, etc.

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti  
15/1/80

Baba, this sorrow I feel today for your absence I feel the distance of Adhyatmika sorrow. It

drains away my strength. It forces me to bend my proud knee before You and beg for a wee bit of Your grace. As Your Mahaprayana draws near, I feel Your distance and the events of that last day of Yours in Tiljala arise again before my inner eye.

Business as usual. The typical chaotic rush of a morning in Central. People bathing, workers rushing up and down corridors, groups of people gossiping, crows cawing, and Mahaprayana draws near, I feel Your distance and the events

I could enjoy Your smile, I could thrill to Your touch, shrink before Your angry glance and sink blissfully into Your eyes.

of that last day of Yours in Tiljala arise even though Diipavali was a few days before, the random explosion of enormous fire crackers.

I was camped on the roof directly overlooking Your residence. I had been restless since my meeting with you the day before. I could still feel the weight of Your hand on my head. My hair felt electrified, my skin crawled and when I sat for sadhana I could barely sit still. I would itch and twitch. And You were obstinently absent from My dhyana. A black void lay where Your form should have been.

People came and went from the

roof but I obstinently sat, trying to do Sadhana. All to no avail. I went down stairs to get Your darshan. I felt relieved that as I could not find You internally I could still see You. You were on this planet for me. You had come for me and waited for me, and now I could bask in Your radiance, I could enjoy Your smile, I could thrill to Your laugh, shrink before Your angry glance and sink blissfully into Your eyes. So, as I couldn't get close to You internally I would enjoy Your physical presence.

I sit for Sadhana at the back gate in the cool shade. The ducks splash about and a few people come after a while to join me in my vigil.

At last You come. So slowly and gracefully You walk down the walkway to your garden. A few people are with You. One Dada is walking backwards singing a Prabhat Sam'giita to You. He makes a mistake and You stop him by singing the line Yourself waving Your hand in the most enchanting way. Once again I feel blessed to be close to You in this way. I had wanted to hear You sing PrabhatSam'giita and You had effortlessly fulfilled my desire.

Soon You are amongst the plants in the garden and slowly but so surely You recede from my sight. I rush to the other gate but the crowd there is impossible so I rush to the roof of the adjacent building and look at You with my binoculars.

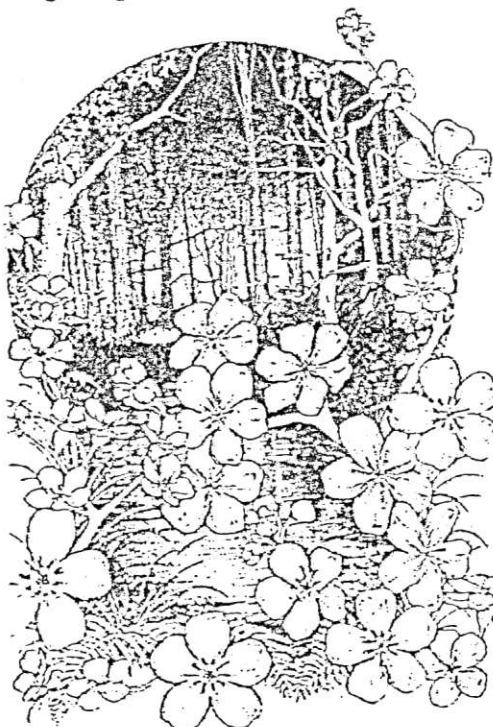
Your form moves stealthily through the greenery of the garden.

There seems to be two of You

before me: the incomparably light Anandamurti, mysterious and enchanting; but there also seems to be the tired, yet beautiful, form of P.R.Sarkar. I notice the heaviness there as You walk. I had noticed this more and more over my last two visits. Your body was wearing out.

It had carried so much for too long and I wonder, not for the first time, how it could last You until 2005.

As You disappear into the building I sigh and return to my dry



sadhana. I cannot understand why, after having had P.C. only the day before, my heart could feel so exalted yet my mind be in such disarray. After an hour of frustration I surrender and go down to Suva Sector room and sit with some workers. They chat idly and I finish knitting the beautiful scarf I've been working on for nearly a month. It is to be a gift to You. Each stitch was turned with mantra

and love.

By mid afternoon there is a growing stillness, a silent anxiety falling over Tiljala. No one seem to notice. S.S. rushes into our room. He looks worried, he makes some excuse about having to make an urgent trip to Ananda Nagar, takes a handful of money from the cupboard and a suit-case, and leaves. The gossip continues but we get restless. I prepare for the evening darshan by getting in to tandava costume. I go down stairs but am told that there was to be no darshan that night. You are ill.

I change and again go down stairs to try to get news of You. An ambulance comes and half an hour later goes. It is not taking You to hospital so You must be alright. We all try to act relieved. Didi Anandamitra looks stricken and stands like an alabaster statue outside Your residence.

An air of oppression hangs over everyone. The shadows grow and some of us still wait outside Your house to get a glimpse of You or to get some news.

Senior workers scurry in and out of Your house. I see Jayanta walk slowly down the walk way. Arms folded. Obviously lost in his own thoughts.

What is going on? The LFT sister Malati is standing next to me. She turns to me and says she and some sisters have been speculating as to whether a third world war had broken out. She has never seen activity like

this, nor has she experienced such a strange vibration before.

The shadows grow and join and night comes. We wait in the dark, looking over the wire at what is increasingly becoming a forlorn group of workers.

At last word comes that we should all meet in the Dhyana Mandir. What are You playing at I wonder. Is there going to be some new project sprung on us. I linger by the wall while most others go into the hall. I hope to catch a glimpse of You, but at last a Dada comes to catch all the stragglers and drag us into the hall.

The lights in the hall are poor and I am two thirds of the way down the back. I sit and do a little sadhana. I had learnt how to wait for people, especially You Baba. Had You not been nearly 3 hours late for the Diipavali celebration just last Wednesday? I can wait for You patiently.

At last there is movement. A large group of Dadas take the stage. One Dada, Your homeopath is ready with a camera, and GS steps forward. He begins talking to the crowd in Bengali. He talks faster and becomes more agitated. Suddenly there is a deep sigh going throughout the hall. My heart starts beating fast. GS is yelling at us. "Baba has left His physical body!" Your GS yells this over and over again. He is yelling in Bangla but I understand. I don't want to understand. But my heart knows. I feel ego move in my heart and I am ashamed.

Contrary thoughts litter my mind. I was one of the last to get P.C.: how blessed I am. Did

my being with You, being touched by You shorten Your time with us? Why so soon after my meeting did You have to leave? You have deserted me! You have no right! My feelings of pride, shame, guilt, anger, betrayal all rush to cover the wound in my heart.

GS stops talking and Dada Vijayananda spoke in English, yet there is no need. We all sit in the hall. The night becomes darker about us. We are all lost in our own thought. I still can not accept it. You are playing a great trick on us. We all knew You were with us until 2005. What is it You want from us to make You come back?

Slowly people leave the hall. Brothers are permitted to see You in state that night, and a huge line forms outside Your residence. Acaryas go in first. So I waited again. We have been told to be composed. There are to be no emotional scenes. And I see only two people that night unable to shoulder the burden of the news.

We stand in the dark. Everything is chiaroscuro. Etched light and dark. Gone are the greys from life. Now light and dark are locked in a battle to the death. All faces are drawn. Eyes are shaded. People whisper. Small groups gather, talk in soft tones, and dissolve into the dark again.

At last I am standing outside Your door again. There is no escaping the irony. I had stood there just yesterday waiting for You. Now I stand there again. Suddenly I am in the room with three other brothers. I am doing Sastaunga

Pranama to Your prostrate body, where just yesterday I had done Pranama to Your smiling form! Slowly, like planets around a dying sun we circle Your bed. You seemed so large, so alive. I study Your face for any signs of life. I am still sure You are tricking me. Yes there is life I thought. I saw a flickering light in Your right nostril. But then it am gone and You are so still and no one else exclaimed at having seen anything. So we marched pass, heavy in heart.

Out side the night is cool and I walk unmolested by guards in Your garden for a little while. Every where I look You are there, intimately associated with each and every object. It is very dark. The lights seemed to fail against the depth of the blackness of that night. There is hardly anyone about as I ascend the stairs.

I decide to sleep in the Suva room. This is not a night for sitting alone. I find in the room a bleak crew of workers. One exclaims on my great good fortune at getting P.C. only the day before. I don't feel so fortunate. I am beginning to recognize the immense debt I owe to You. How can I ever repay You for Your blessing?

We are joined that night by Dada Ramaneshananda. I suspect that each room is graced by a senior worker. If he has come to help us cope with the disaster he fails. He is as lost as the rest of us. Still when someone insists that You will return to us, he insists that You always obeyed Prakrti; that You had the utmost confidence in us





## Correspondence

**Kamala**  
from Malta writes

**W**e're making a lot of progress here and in May for the first time we had our sectorial conference in Malta, which made a huge impact on our small society. We're still struggling to get a significant project started, and hopefully in a year's time we'll have a school.

Malta is very small, with a population of one-third of a million, but compared to other countries with

populations of millions, the number of margiis is quite significant. We have a mailing list of about a hundred initiated margiis, with about 25 coming regularly to DC. We have regular yoga classes twice or three times a week. We teach about vegetarianism and till two months ago I was chairperson of the Malta Vegetarian Society which was started by three of us at Ananda Marga. I am still very active in it, and so is my husband,

but I had to give up my post because I want to dedicate all my time to AM directly.

Every month or so we organise a veg dinner for socialising and also with the purpose of fundraising. Sometimes we even had 100 guests. It depends on the venue, of course, how many people we can take. Mostly it's at one margii's house, we take it by turns, but it's always pleasant and a good opportunity for doing service, especially for those of us who are committed to cook every time.

We have recently formed a PWSA committee and it's nice to see that some new margii sisters seem to be very inspired to become involved organisationally in areas which focus on women's problems and the advancement of women in general. It is still a very new project but we're thinking there is a lot we can do. Malta is still very patriarchal in many ways, and we feel the attitude of the women themselves has to change.

I have been preparing a regular monthly newsletter called "Namaskar" for the past 5 years. My husband is a graphic designer in printing so we work a lot together on this. We also published an annual edition of "Namaskar" which was for sale to the public and was quite well received (rela-

and that, as You have left, You surely knew that we had the resources to cope with the great challenge that lay ahead: the realization of Your vision.

The next morning everyone rises mechanically. A simple glance around the room is enough to tell me that last night am not a bad dream. We all do our sadhana. I do mine on the roof and I returned to the Suva room to do asanas. Dada Ramaneshananda is still there. He is trying to console us, but his presence has more eloquent than his words as I have a great affection for this worker. As he leaves to attend to the day's pressing duties he said: "Now all the charm and fascination has left the world."

8

At that time we all felt this. It is only as the days, months, and years pass that we realise in our lives

and sadhana that You are still with us. You have come closer to us by shedding Your physical frame. I still deeply miss Your physical presence in my life. I challenge anyone to convey Your personal charm to another who has not experienced it. It is impossible. The struggle now is to experience You internally, to find that lonely spot in our heart where You still wait for us.

Your physical absence is a source of the adhyatmika sorrow that goads us in our inner quest for You. Yet it is not the fullest or most profound source. It is the inner quest itself, adorned as it is by moments of intimacy and great stretches of distance, by You grace, and foolery, and humour that is the well spring of this sorrow. It inspires the longing and determination which drives all sadhakas to maintain their relentless search for You.



tively speaking of course)

My husband and I got the first glimpse of Ananda Marga the October of His passing. We became



margiis three months later and till today I can't understand why Baba left it so late to call us. Surely there is a reason, but the question is there. We have both been to India for Jan DMS, my husband this year and me the year before. We love Ananda Nagar and wish to go back, maybe for Jan 2000. It's very difficult for us to travel.

Take good care and enjoy His Bliss,

-Kamala

## Sangklaburi

by Dada Jitentananda Avt

**S**ituated in a remote corner of northwestern Thailand a story of compassion and love unfolds, known only to a few people.

Baan Unraak (The House of Love) is nestled amidst the rich green forests and unspoiled nature of Sangklaburi town, some 350 kms. from Bangkok near the famous bridge over the River Kwai.

The Home is a refuge for 25 young girls and boys whose unfortunate past forced them to leave their native Burma, orphaned and helpless. Run by a 40 year old woman from Italy called Didi's the Home is one of the projects of the Neo-Humanist Foundation. This foundation was registered in 1991 in Thailand by volunteers inspired by the philosophy of Neo-Humanism as given by Shri P.R. Sarkar (Baba).

Here in the peaceful environment of rural Thailand, under the watchful eye of their adopted mother, the children grow the

emotional bonds of affection and caring feelings denied to them from an early age. Through a combination of good luck, hard work and using her inborn skills of clothing design, Didi manages to feed, clothe, shelter and educate her large brood though her source of funding is only a few sympathizer donors and friends.

Didi started a school for 100 refugee children in 1991 and thereafter began taking in children who were either abandoned by an overburdened mother or left parentless due to malaria and malnourishment. What started with 5 children six years ago has now grown to 25 children today. Even then Didi has to refuse to take in more needy children since her own capacities are stretched beyond the limit. A day doesn't pass where someone will come to Didi's large house on the southwest corner of the small Sangklaburi town, seeking a job, money to trek back to Burma, food to eat or medicine for malaria. All leave satisfied; nobody goes unattended to even if it is the last bhat Didi has.

All of the children are given a daily domestic duty for the smooth running of the Home. That includes shuttling the little ones by second hand motorbike to kindergarten 2 kilometers away from Baan Unraak. At the Home, the older children share in the cooking and cleaning duties while the little ones play happily, forgetful of their deprived past.

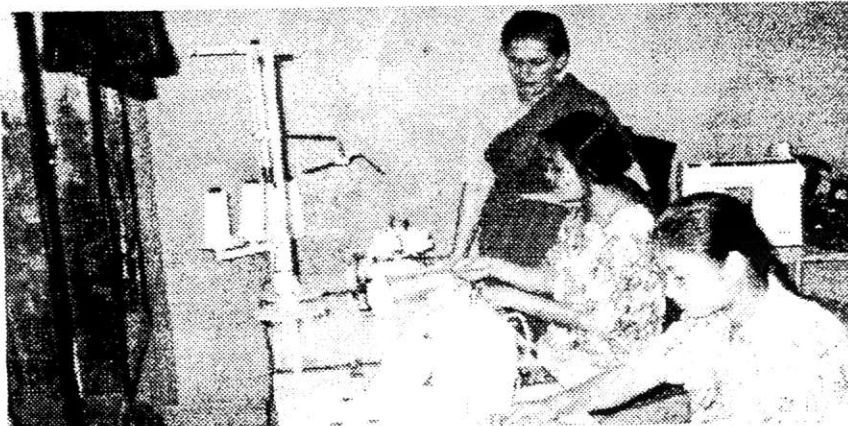
To help finance her Home as well as to provide dignified employment to poor women of Sangklaburi, Didi recently started a Sewing and Weaving Center with seed money provided by the British Embassy in Bangkok. Her cottage industry makes entirely locally manufactured products. There are now 24 women around Sangklaburi who weave the various cloth patterns requested by Didi for which they earn a sufficient stipend to feed their families while working at home. At the Center, other workers sew the patterns onto Thai hemp cloth. Thus far the Center produces shoulder bags, back packs, passport bags,

money purses and vests, which are sold in retail outlets in Bangkok as well as to a few sympathetic private sellers. Not only do the funds earned help to feed Didi's children, but the

water facility for domestic and farming purposes.

As he did when she first arrived nine years ago, Didi pays regular visits to the Burmese refugee camps to

future appears dim and uncertain. Earlier this year the SLORC tried to wipe out many refugee camps as they sought to remove the last pockets of resistance to their dictatorial rule before entering the ASEAN trading block.



*Didi overseeing the production of industry products at the Sewing and Weaving Centre which employs 24 village women.*

older girls of the Home learn valuable life skills such as accounting, marketing, and sewing which they can use for their future adult life.

offer whatever donations she receives from her sympathizers. One such camp called Toniya is about

The story of the suffering of these people as they stoically reveal, is grim testament of man's cruelty to his fellow creatures. Didi's regular visits, irregardless of the small material help which she renders, are a source of inspiration and upliftment for the refugees who are sensitive to the warm touch of the human heart.

There are several ways in which you could help Didi. You could buy her hemp cloth products. You could sponsor one child \$30 every month for its food, medicine and education.

Didi's employment opportunity for the mothers of the area provides them with the much needed cash to keep their families above the poverty line. At the same time, the women can remain in the familiar setting of their village while earning extra cash to tend to their families' needs.

Apart from her rented house in Sangklaburi town, Didi also has a 5 acre land in Huai Malay village 20 kilometers from the main town. The land however is without adequate water facility. Didi has failed to reach the water table in her five previous attempts, making it difficult for her to shift her children to

the farm. To provide a permanent shelter for her children, Didi hopes to either buy her present house which she is renting or buy another land near the Songkhla river which has adequate



*Didi with her 30 children at the Sangklaburi Children's Home.*

one kilometer from the Thai-Burma border. It is home for 1555 men, women and children. Life in the refugee camp is hard almost to the point of being unbearable. The daily food ration consists of rice, salt and fish paste, hardly a diet to remain healthy with. No oil, no vegetables, no spices. The refugees try to supplement their meager diet by picking whatever wild fruits and roots which grow in the tropical forest near the border. But malaria and malnourishment are the causes of sickness and despair amongst the refugees whose

You could donate for Didi to buy a permanent shelter for her children. For her and the children every small contribution helps. So that the smiles that adorn the faces of the children remain a permanent feature for the rest of their lives.

contact Dada Jitentananda  
Avt for Didi's address.

# In Search Of Him

BY DINESH

**S**ydney from Adelaide. This big city of Sydney was to become my home for the next seven years.

For a number of years I had an interest in the therapeutic and transcendental effects of meditation. In the previous two or so years before my departure from Adelaide I had been participating in a meditation and yoga group and regularly practicing meditation. I recall my meditation practice during those years had assisted me through the last two demanding years of my social work degree studies. When I arrived in Sydney I wished to maintain my involvement in an eastern spiritual group that had meditation as a central part of its spiritual practice. I was also clear that I no longer wished to remain involved with the previous movement, as I had little admiration for the founding teachers because of their lifestyle habits of tobacco smoking, gambling and alcohol use.

I visited the Siddha Yoga Ashram in Sydney but left astounded at the financial cost involved in their meditation and

yoga courses. The idea of paying a large amount of money for such courses is purely materialist, and contrary to my view of obtaining spiritual lessons. I had been initiated into Transcendental Meditation some fourteen years previously but avoided that organisation for the same reason.

After approximately two months in Sydney I came across an advertisement about a group called the meditators bush walking club. To my delight this was an interesting coming together of two of my favourite past-times. Before long I was sitting with a group of like minded people in beautiful New South Wales National Parks meditating beside a cool mountain stream, or amidst a woodland forest. It was on these walks that I met my first margiis and acharya. (I had met an acharya and margiis in Adelaide but at the time did not have knowledge of these particular aspects of their lives. It was some years

later that I met this same acharya while on an Ananda Marga (A.M.) study tour in India. He had been moved in his posting from Adelaide and was based in Columbia!) My first two favourable impressions of A.M. were that margiis liked and valued the natural world and that the organisation had a monastic order.

Before long I was initiated, had my copy of sixteen points and was attending the Sydney jagriti for dharmacakra. Every step from here on into the culture and philosophical world of A.M. was a journey of great interest and excitement. Here was an organisation that seemed to bring together many of my own political, spiritual, ecological and cultural beliefs and values into a comprehensive ideology and lifestyle. A new world was unfolding. A significant part of this unfolding was my admiration for the breadth and depth of wisdom and intellect of the founder of A.M.

*A new world was unfolding. A significant part of this unfolding was my admiration for the breadth and depth of wisdom and intellect of the founder of A.M., Baba.*

,Baba. The more I read and heard about him the more I was amazed at how his knowledge seemed to surpass any other known writer that I had ever read. At the time I thought Karl Marx was remarkable for the extent of his writings on political economics and sociology. As a thinker Baba was not only remarkable in these fields but went further into every conceivable field of thought.

It is important to mention what has shaped me and thus determined who I am and the course that my journey has and will, I believe, continue to take in this life. For it is these things that have led me to A.M. and to adopt A.M. as my way of life. There have been significant events and times in my life that have greatly influenced my thinking. As a young man in his late teens I had the opportunity to



live and work in the desert country of the Northern Territory. It was here that I had my first exposure to the tribal culture of the indigenous Australians and also to the richness of the wilderness with its great range of plants and animals. The preservation of our human cultural diversity and biodiversity seemed crucial to a vibrant world.

In 1981 I spent one year living in Latin America where I became absorbed into the politics and indigenous culture of this region. When I arrived back in Australia I undertook social work studies and learnt to value the notion of service to society. But what both of these significant experiences opened my mind to was the immensity of human suffering, inequality and injustice in the world and the inability of societies to evolve lasting solutions

vehemently opposed to Australia's foreign policy which supported the foreign policy of the United States of America with its nuclear militarism and support of fascist governments and oppression of anti colonial movements. I was committed to Australia ending its alliance with the United States and joining the non aligned nations grouping. After a few years I moved away from strict communism for two reasons.

Firstly I did not believe that communism provided adequately for individual expression and incentive. It was too regimented. Secondly I was influenced by the writings of the former East German academic and dissident Rudolph Bahro, who after his release from prison moved to West Germany to become one of the founding members of the

world was a crucial component of a sustainable future. A few years after leaving the Communist Party I joined the Australia Democrats as they had incorporated into their vision the foundation of ecological sustainability on which they based their policies. I remain a member to this day. Permaculture and bio-regionalism also were added to the 'collection of ideas' for a better society along with my recently adopted practice of vegetarianism.

One element remained missing. I still felt I had no culture. My reading and viewing of many traditional cultures revealed such a depth of songs, stories and ceremonies that I felt were largely absent from my life. Added to this was a desire for a rich relationship or connection to the land and sky, and mysticism about the cosmic. I could take no nourishment from the Christian tradition although I had been raised in a strong Catholic community. I always recall one Australian writer, whose name I cannot recall, referring to Australian society being largely an observer rather than a participant society. That is, we spend much of our time viewing other societal traditions as tourists, cinema goers and television watchers.

After my initiation into A.M. meditation I started to read Babas writings and spend time speaking with the acharyas. As I learnt more about A.M. philosophy I could see that Baba had, through his revival of tantric yoga practice in its complete form and his addition of P.R.O.U.T. and Neo humanism, developed a complete way of life. His philosophy embraced all that I valued. My entry into A.M. was

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to this problem which had plagued human history from its very beginnings. I must also mention that within this was my own struggle to overcome my own suffering and to develop a strong sense of self.

West German Green Party. He wrote of the environmental destruction caused by industry that was common to both the communist and capitalist societies.

During my membership of the Communist Party I also joined the Wilderness Society, an organisation that I remain a member of to this day. Ecological thinking started to become a significant part of my world view. The concept of environmental sustainability I viewed as the outlook that should underpin society's evolution. The right of all living beings to have a place in our

Keen to be a participant involved in the process of moving society towards a better future I joined the Communist Party of Australia (C.P.A.) believing that Marxist ideology had within it solutions to society's major problems. The C.P.A. was not Soviet or Communist China aligned. At the time I was also



a coming together of many different facets of my life. In addition A.M. has its songs, in the form of prabhat samgeet; its dances in the form of kiirtan, tandava and kaoshikii; and its ceremonies such as tree planting, baby naming and wedding ceremonies, amongst many other things. I often think of a paragraph from his essay titled Ananda Marga: A Revolution which appears in the Prout in a nutshell series part 11. "Never before in the entire history of this world or the universe, if it could be known to mortals, has a system of life fully embracing the economic, social, mental and spiritual spheres ever been correlated in such a closely knit society as in Ananda Marga."

I now live back in Adelaide where I am the Bhukti Pradhan for the Adelaide jagriti. This position allows me to give back to A.M. all that it has given to me over the years. In addition I take great satisfaction from seeing Babas mission slowly unfold within the community that we are building around the Adelaide jagriti. While the growth in our local A.M. commu-

nity is small in comparison to the world itself the steps we are taking are significant in terms of replacing the destructive greed and selfishness of corporate capitalism and its world view, as laid down by the News Corporation and McDonalds, with a society based on spirituality, morality

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and neo-humanism.

While I have embraced the A.M. lifestyle there are still challenges to be had. Much of this centres around the discipline of meditation within which I do struggle at times. Part of the struggle has been due to lifestyle factors such as full time employment and parenting which are both very demanding of their time. Here I always find it valuable to reflect back on a quote from the Maharishi (the founder of Transcendental Meditation) that I read many years ago. "If you are too busy

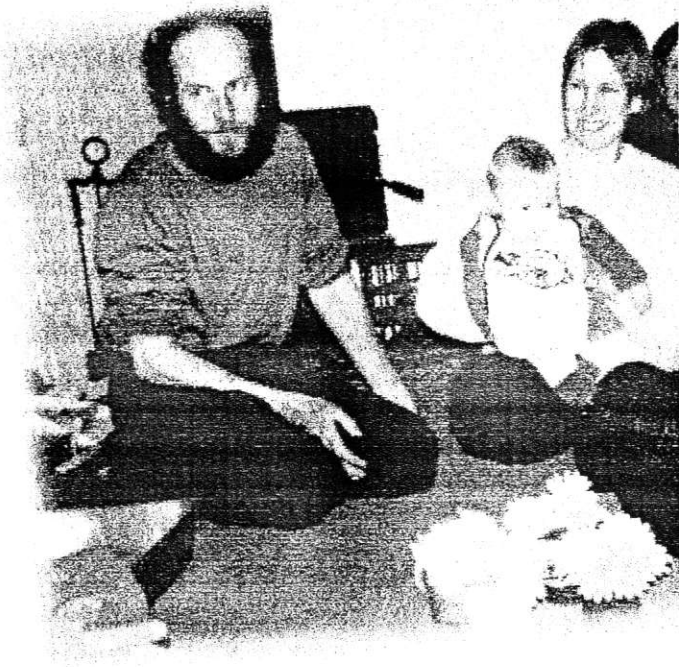
to meditate then you are too busy in your life." This struggle with my meditation is wrestled within my meditation itself. The focus of this struggle within my meditation is a two sided coin. It can detract from my meditation but at the same time it feels somehow right that all of the struggle is played out

during meditation. There are lessons waiting to be learnt here but as yet I have little understanding of them. My meditation provides a time and place to retreat from the world. It is my inner sanctum.

I am happy being a margii. I foresee several lifetimes of learning from Baba's books and an eternity of learning from my meditation practice. The acharyas remain a strong inspiration to me and it is from them that I gain strength to continue with the propagation of Baba's mission.

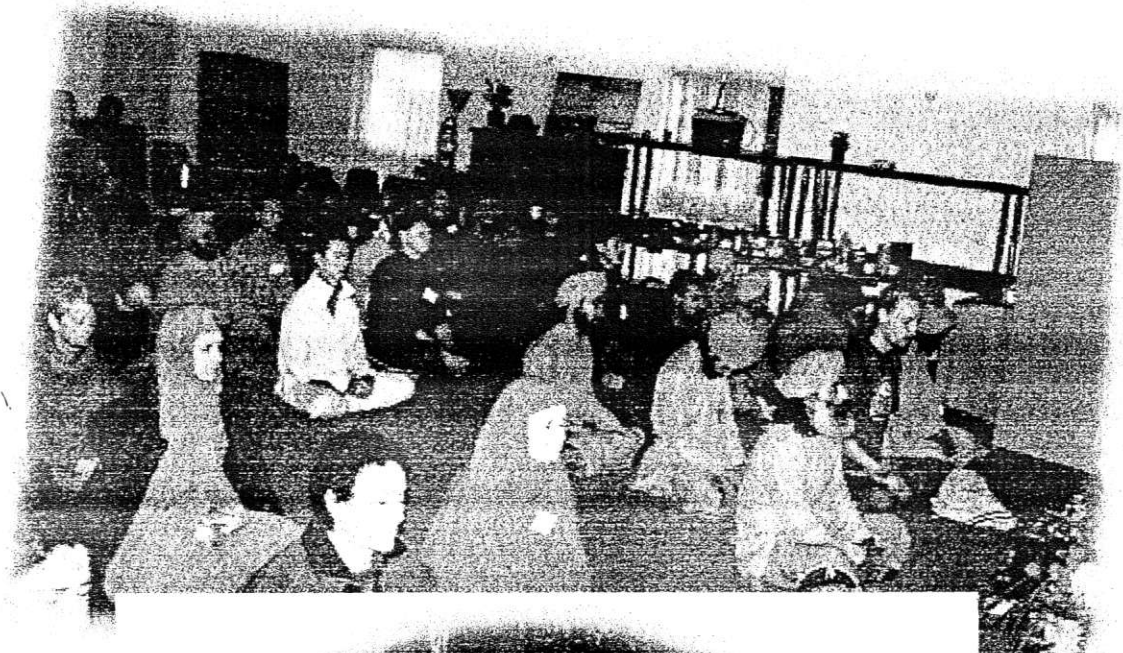


*Baby naming ceremony of Liila & Ramakrishna's baby son Rainjan*



**Adelaide Sectorial  
Conference (July 98)**  
**Snar**

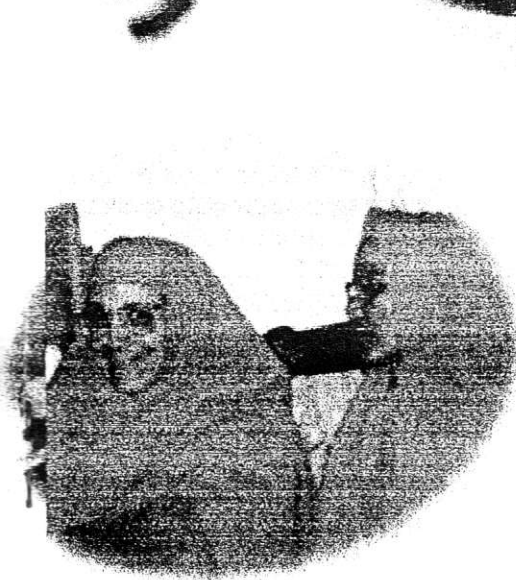




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# Methods To Achieve Success In Sadhana

by Ac. Maheshananda Avt.

**T**antra, according to Shrii Shrii Anandamurtiji, is 95% practice and only 5% theory. What this means for spiritual aspirants is that the direct intuitional realisation we achieve through our systematic sadhana is more important and more relevant to our lives, than mere learning. Above all, sadhana is to be experienced. By experimenting with our own sadhana, that is, by practicing the advice that Baba has given us, we can experience the deeper layers of the mind and the bliss that is the "birthright of every human being." The following techniques have come from Baba's published works and from seminar classes taught by the Central Office workers. Try them and you will enjoy deeper, more blissful sadhana.

## 1. Before sadhana your body, mouth and stomach should be clean. If

you meditate immediately after taking bath, your body will feel completely fresh. Half bath (vyapak shaoca) includes cleaning the mouth with water, for any slight taste will create another distraction. Heavy eating, or eating the wrong foods, may result in constipation or indigestion, which will make you sleepy when you meditate.

**2. Wear clean, loose clothing.** Hard, physical service work is good for the body and the mind. Physical dirt and sweat need not disturb us. By putting on clean clothing before sadhana you will feel fresher. Tight pants will prevent you from sitting longer. A lungi (sarong) is an excellent type of men's clothing for meditation.

**3. Sit on a sadhana blanket.** Baba recommends that you keep one blanket that is only used for your personal sadhana. It

will insulate you from the ground and should not be used by others so that only your sadhana vibration is maintained on it. Baba recommended a black wool blanket because wool is a good insulator from the electrical currents in the earth, and black is the absence of colours.

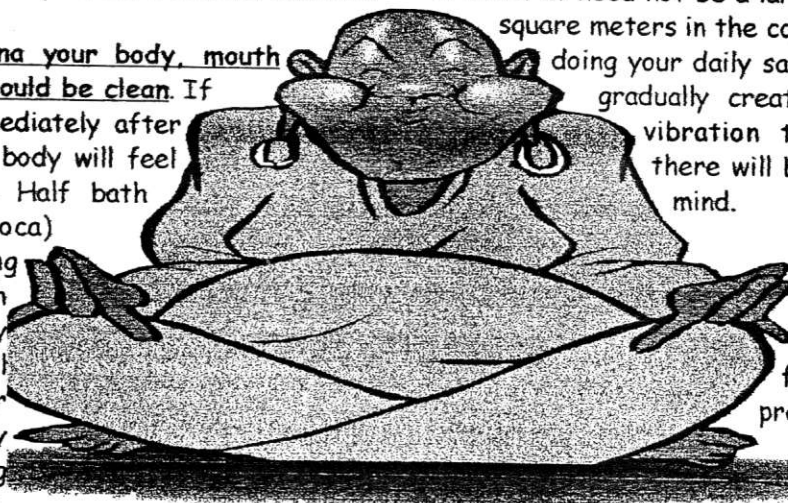
**4. Create a "tantra pitha" vibration in your regular sadhana place.** A "tantra pitha" is a place where intense spiritual practices have been performed. Do not meditate on your bed if you can help it, as that place will tend to make you sleepy. You should keep one room or at least part of a room where no other activity except sadhana is done. It need not be a large space- one or two square meters in the corner is sufficient. By doing your daily sadhana there, you will gradually create such a conducive vibration that merely sitting there will begin to elevate your mind.

## 5. Maintain your puja table beautifully.

Place a framed pratik and pratikrti (the photo of the Guru) on a small table in front of your

sadhana place. It is better if you are not looking down at these, so the table should be at the height of your eye level or a little higher when you sit for sadhana. A clean tablecloth and fresh flowers will help create an inspiring, sentient atmosphere.

**6. Sit very straight.** Only when your spine is completely straight can it carry the spiritual energy of the kundalini. By raising your head high and sitting very erect your mind will be completely alert and awake. Relaxing your back somewhat, allowing your spine to curve even a little, will cause your mind to become drowsy and wander.





**7 Practice sitting in padmasana (lotus) or siddhasana for a long time.** The lotus posture keeps your mind undisturbed and unpolluted by the troubles of the world, just as the lotus flower is ever pure even though it grows in dirty water. This posture is best for withdrawing the mind (first lesson). Women should also practice pranayama (fourth lesson) and dhyana (sixth lesson) in padmasana, while men should sit in siddhasana for these. Train your body with the determination of an athlete until you can sit motionlessly for one hour or more. Then your concentration will remain undisturbed and you can enter the deeper layers of the mind.

**8 Begin with 80 times japa.** Baba gave this instruction in 1978 on the first page of the revised edition of Caryacarya II. Before doing first lesson or other lessons, begin by repeating your Ista Mantra exactly eighty times. You can count either mentally or with your fingers, but do not use your first finger (which is commonly used as an expression of the ego). If you practice this in coordination with your breathing, it should take you five or ten minutes. Concentrating only on the sound of the mantra and its meaning will help your mind to naturally forget your usual distracting thoughts, and prepare you for your lessons.

**9 Breathe slowly and deeply.** Tantrik scriptures state that controlling the breath is the key to controlling the prana (vital energy of the body), and controlling the prana is the key to controlling the mind. Do not hold your breath

or strain, but allow your breathing to naturally become slower and deeper. This will immediately give your mind a feeling of much deeper concentration.

**10 Do the three "shuddhis" of the first lesson slowly and carefully.** Shuddhi in Sanskrit means withdrawal of the mind. In the first lesson, the first mental technique is "bhuta shuddhi", which means to withdraw the mind from the physical world. The second technique is "asana shuddhi", to withdraw the mind from the physical body. The third technique is "citta shuddhi", to withdraw the mind to a point. Do these three processes slowly with deep concentration to prepare the mind properly for the deeper ideation of the first lesson and other lessons.

*Train your body with the determination of an athlete until you can sit motionlessly for one hour or more. Then your concentration will remain undisturbed and you can enter the deeper layers of the mind.*

**11 Get all the lessons as soon as possible.** In Caryacarya II (page 4) Baba writes, "Human life is short. It is wise to get all the instructions regarding sadhana as soon as possible." Each of the six main lessons of Sahaj Yoga systematically improves and deepens your sadhana, because they are based on the different limbs of Astanga Yoga. It is your duty to request and remind your Acarya for instruction in the next higher lesson. If the Dada or Didi replies that you are not yet ready, then ask what you can do to become ready (which usually means becoming more strict in the

Sixteen Points). Do not be content with less than all six lessons.

**12 Take advantage of the four sandhya times of the day for doing sadhana.**

These are the best times of the day when the vibration of the earth is most conducive for spiritual practices. The first period is "Brahma Mahurta" from 3:00 AM until 45 minutes after dawn. The second period, especially for LFT's and WT's, is at noon from 11:15 AM until 12:45 PM. The third period is from 45 minutes before sunset until 45 minutes after sunset. The last period is at midnight from 11:15 PM until 12:45 AM. Do not bathe during this midnight period, as there the body secretes certain hormones then. Don't postpone your sadhana, for you will enjoy it more

during these times.

**13 Do "pancajanya" every day at 5:00 AM.** Baba gave this program for all Margiis and workers in 1982. He named it after the conch shell that Krsna captured in his youth from a pirate, which he blew as his battle cry. Performing this spiritual practice (5 minutes of Prabhat Samgiit, followed by 15 minutes of kiirtan, then sadhana) at exactly 5:00 AM every day requires a lot of self-discipline. Baba said He gave us this program to instill "active habits" in us.

**14. Do sadhana late at night.** All Margiis should follow the workers rule of doing half bath and at least a few minutes of sadhana before sleeping at night. If you are well established in the repetition of your mantra and you fall asleep repeating it, it is possible for your subconscious mind to continue repeating it during your sleep.

**15. Read svadhyaya daily.** Read at least one page of Baba's spiritual philosophy books each day. This is a part of our Sixteen Points. Reading it aloud will increase your comprehension. This allows you to "hear" and be guided by the Guru's words each day.

**16. Repeat your mantra as much as possible throughout the day and especially during all spare time.** Repeating your mantra with your eyes open is called "Ardha Iishvara Pranidhana" which means half meditation; it gives the sadhaka the benefits of mantra repetition without the full benefits of closing and stilling all the sensory and motor organs. It therefore is not a substitute for full meditation, though it does help to establish the mantra in the mind and thus will give you deeper sadhana when you do sit. Remember, no one can waste your time except yourself, because in whatever situation you may find yourself delayed or left waiting, you can always repeat your mantra and thus utilise the time for your spiritual progress.

**17. Dance kiirtan daily, singing loudly.** Baba gave this advice repeatedly to Margiis and workers. When we dance kiirtan before our sadhana, all our sensory and motor organs become stimulated with the spiritual wave of the "Baba Nam Kevalam" universal mantra. Do it long enough that no other mundane thoughts enter your conscious mind. Baba told the workers that if their minds are very disturbed and they have only one hour for their spiritual practices, it is better to sing kiirtan for fifty minutes and meditate for only ten minutes. For those ten minutes they will enjoy deep meditation.

**18. Do long kiirtan sometimes.** When you personally do kiirtan for more than one hour, it fills you with a divine intoxication. So organise and participate in Akhanda Kiirtan at least once a month.

**19. Gaze at the pratik for long periods.** The symbol of the pratik is a yantra, a visual symbolisation of your spiritual and social goal. Staring at it silently is called "full maonabrat" and helps to establish the sublime Ideology in the heart and mind.

**20. Gaze at Baba's photo for long periods.** Whenever the mind feels disturbed in sadhana, take a break and look at the Guru's photo (pratikrti) for a while. This will again bring your mind towards your spiritual goal (Ista).

**21. Sing Prabhat Samgiit.** These songs of Baba have the characteristic that however clashed your mind may be, singing any of them will bring your mind back to the flow of devotion. Learn some and then try it.

**22. Do sadhana in a lonely place sometimes.** This recommendation of Baba in Guide to Human Conduct (last page) helps to withdraw the mind. My trainer once advised us that if we go on a physical outing (eg. a picnic or a sports event) the more people who go, the better. If we go on an intellectual outing (eg. a visit to a museum or a discussion group), a small number of participants is better. But if we go on a spiritual outing, it is best to go alone. Go alone on a spiritual retreat in some natural environment for a few hours, a day or longer.

**23. Do sadhana in a cemetery sometimes.** There are two main reasons why Tantrik sadhakas do this—first, because cemeteries are usually quiet and lonely, so that no sounds will disturb your concentration; second, because we associate such a place with death, which is the greatest fear of everyone. By meditating in a cemetery we face such fear head on. However, Baba has instructed that Margiis should not go at night unless accompanied by an Avadhuta.

**24. Attend Dharmacakra every week.** This instruction to attend collective



meditation is told to each Margii at the time of initiation. Baba writes in Caryacarya I (pp. 22-23) that every Margii in good health must attend (He exempted nursing mothers from this rule). If duties of state or service to a patient prevent you, then go to the Jagrti any time that day and do sadhana; otherwise "he/she should completely skip one main meal before the end of the week." No matter how advanced you are spiritually, the collective sadhana vibration will benefit you and help you to overcome obstacles that arise in your sadhana. Dharmacakra is also the basic foundation of Ananda Marga and helps us to develop one of our treasures: "an intensely keen unity among yourselves" (p. 43).

**25.** Have satsaung as much as possible. To be in the company of Acaryas, LFT's and other Margiis, sharing experiences and stories of Baba and news of the organisation, helps immensely in keeping your mind more and more in the flow of devotion.

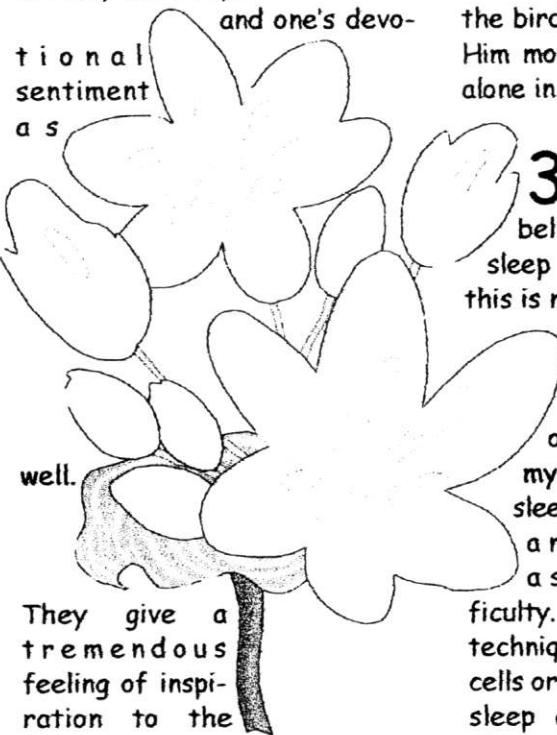
**26.** Eat a balanced sentient diet. This was one of Shiva's "seven secrets of success." Because our food is biologically and chemically transformed to create every cell of our body, a sentient diet is very important to maintain a sentient mind.

**27.** Do asanas daily. Practicing yoga postures daily is essential to maintain healthy glands and balance the secretion of hormones. Baba gives special instruction in the fifth lesson of meditation to prevent the pollution of the

cakras that takes place when, for any reason, asanas are not performed that day. The gradual flexing of the body that takes place during asanas also helps you to be able to sit motionlessly in sadhana for longer periods.

**28.** Do long kaoshikii and tandava. Both these dances are physico-psycho-spiritual, meaning that they develop not only the body, but the mind and one's devo-

tional sentiment as



well.

They give a tremendous feeling of inspiration to the sadhaka. "While dancing kaoshikii one seeks to establish the link between the microcosm and the Macrocosm. This process is commonly known as mysticism. Kaoshikii pertains to the innermost kosas, the layers of existence. The kaoshikii dance is like the blossoming of the innermost self."

**29.** Be strict in the Sixteen Points. Baba gave this practical formula to create in every person the necessary strength to eradicate their individual weaknesses. For example, by fasting every week

or two we avoid being a slave to food (as most people are) and are able to do without it at any time.

**30.** Practice silence more. Do you want to hear God? Then you must be quiet and listen. You will hear Him speaking through the words of children and those whom others do not listen to. You will also hear Him in the quiet sounds of nature: the wind, the streams, the bird calls. And you will hear Him most deeply when you are alone in silent meditation.

**31.** Sleep less. "The ancient people believed that excessive sleep is good for health, but this is not the case. Rather, too much sleep not only impairs the health, but has an adverse effect on the mind. . . . As for myself, I usually do not sleep more than four hours a night for many months at a stretch, and have no difficulty. Those who know special techniques to control the nerve cells or nerve fibers may forego sleep altogether. Those who sleep too much must strive to reduce their sleeping time as far as practical." (Baba in Ananda Vacanamrtam VIII, pp. 28-29).

**32.** Serve others. "If someone works only for their own spiritual elevation, for their own liberation, are they not selfish? While working for your own liberation, you must also serve others." (Great Universe, p. 258). Though you may become very physically tired while assisting Ananda Marga



service projects, your sadhana afterwards will usually feel fantastic- because you have been doing work that pleases Him.

### **33. Teach others meditation and the Ideology.**

Any Margii may teach anyone the universal meditation mantra, "Baba Nam Kevalam." You may also teach anyone Kaoshikii, self-massage and the corpse posture. You may also explain our spiritual and social philosophy to all. Teaching others spirituality is one of the highest forms of service. Do not be disappointed if very few or none of your students become active Margiis. You are planting spiritual seeds that will never be lost and will definitely sprout someday. Doing this basic pracar "is a part and parcel of sadhana, to lead others along the path of righteousness."

### **34. Attend all retreats and seminars.**

You will learn more about Ananda Marga at live-in seminars and conferences than you will during months and years of doing individual sadhana. The schedule

that Baba taught us to implement at retreats is 24 hours worth of spiritual practices, satsaung and Ideology—as well as the most blissful kiirtans you will ever experience in your life.

### **35. Develop a strong determination for sadhana.**

Baba often praised the spiritual determination of Buddha, who achieved enlightenment by taking the vow, "May my body dry up in this very posture and may my skin, bones and flesh be destroyed; but until the intuition, which is difficult to attain in millennia, remains unattained, my body shall not move even an inch from this place."

### **36. Be a strict moralist.**

Spiritual practice in its very inception requires mental equilibrium. This sort of mental harmony may also be termed morality." (Guide to Human Conduct, page 1)

### **37. Take your clash to Baba.**

When you are upset, go to any empty room with Baba's photo and confront Him. Release your anger, or your tears, on Him. Don't

leave until He gives you again the peace of mind to continue.

### **38. Become "mad for the organisation."**

Baba, as the founder and President of the organisation, created, from its very inception, all its policies, guidelines, structure, codes of discipline, strategy and training programs. It is His means to accomplish His Mission—to establish a universal world society of justice, righteousness and rationality. By plunging ourselves into noble organisational work, we are constantly reminded of our spiritual mission and we open ourselves to His guidance and correction.

### **39. Ideate that you are serving Baba and that He is meditating on you.**

This is the inner spirit of Dhyana, the sixth lesson.

### **40. Do Guru Puja and Pranam.**

The physical postures of sastaung pranam (for men) or diirga pranam (for women) are the ideal physical expressions of surrender to the Supreme, the most significant spiritual ideal of all.

## Future Perspectives – part 2

by Subodh

Taking a sociological approach towards Sarkar himself, we should not be surprised at his convictions. Being based in Calcutta, having experienced the brutality of the British Raj, we should not be surprised at his alternative reading of history.

As an Indian, with India's ancient history of the rise and fall of empires, from the Guptas to the Mugals, we should also not be surprised that Sarkar has cyclical elements in his social history. Living as well in a land where death is ever-present, not hidden as in the West, again we should not be surprised at his acceptance of death in life.

However, and this is crucial, Sarkar does have a linear element, wherein human beings can move toward a better and more fair society. However, for him progress is ultimately spiritual, and to some degree, psycho-spiritual and not physical or intellectual. In the linear story, technology, more complex organization, and human ingenuity leads to progress at materi-



al and intellectuals levels. But Sarkar is quick to point out that for every forward movement there are accompanying problems- increased neurosis, for example, as human's increase their intellectual complexity.

There is no free lunch at material and intellectual levels. But perhaps the biggest difference with Sarkar's Prout and other stories is that for Sarkar, perfection is only possible at the spiritual and the individual level. An individual through spiritual practices can attain moksa or salvation but a society cannot, nor can a civilization.

Within the cyclical story, nature itself is perfect, the dream is to return to this perfect state, when humans existed in community with each other. Within the linear story, perfection of society is possible, either through science, technology and through the correct organization-ideology (nazism, fascism, socialism and capitalism have been some not so successful experiments, to put it mildly).

But for Sarkar, the "state of nature" is problematic. Humans have always struggled with nature and our memories of community often avoid the violent social stratification that traditional and feudal societies exhibited. History has always been unkind to the weaker.

Finally, social perfection is impossible since humans are different. Moves to perfection necessarily mean the elimination of difference and thus are authoritarian and totalitarian in nature. Whereas God is perfect, Sarkar's idea of the

Supreme Consciousness does not exist in history as with the Hegelian *weltgeist* - rather God serves to inspire humans to be more than their limited ego/family/nation/race conceptions - and there is no endusztand in human history, the cycles will continue.

Through Proutistic intervention, however, Sarkar hopes to create a new form of spiritual-holistic leadership that can minimize the exploitive dimensions of the cycle and create a spiral in human history, thus effectively combining the cyclical and linear story.

There is however, a third story. This is the story of chaos, most recently returning to currency through the Postmodern fracture. In this story, all stories are considered more than fictions but dangerous lies. What is needed is not another story, like Prout, but rather a focus on local knowledge and not on attempts to universalize from particular experiences.

Thus, in the postmodern, while Sarkar might certainly be sensible in his own historical and cultural context (Tantra and Bengal), his works should not be generalized to other systems. Indeed, the future, more and more, is difference and not unity. It is through difference that individual humans rights and local economies can flourish and not through claims of globalism or universal spirituality.

For Sarkar, the story of chaos is the predictable type of story one gets at the end of one yuga, one era. Difference and chaos are especially important at this juncture to destroy the old and

create the new. But neither skepticism and cynicism nor localism can create a future society. They cannot create, only destroy.

Localism, again while a worthy oppositional strategy to break the hegemony of capitalism, is unable to create a world civilization that guarantees rights for all nor can it deal with the fluidity of global capital flows or global culture. Localism easily succumbs to racism and other narrow tendencies. The challenge is, of course, the mix of the global and local, which Prout claims it has right. But like postmodernists, Sarkar does contest traditional definitions of rationality.

But while postmodernists see the rational as dependent on particular discourses, Sarkar privileges the spiritual. He redefines rationality, seeing it in spiritual and social justice terms. He places the subtleness of inner love at the centre of his cosmology. But while love was the base, he does not neglect the harsh realities of the world system. Certain recent thinkers have argued for a new story to end all historical stories, a New Age. What is needed is a new myth, a story of stories, it is believed.

However, for Sarkar - here a critical traditionalist - stories are not merely imaginations created by intellectuals in libraries (or through channelling) but are hard fought struggles of meaning and vision, of life and death. Stories come through trauma - as we struggle against power - and transcan-

Who will provide the story?

While it is easy to state that Prout itself is the old/new story, this is too myopic a reading. Sarkar himself has argued that Prout, Ananda Marga and Renaissance cadres, must unite the various moral forces. By moral forces, what exactly was Sarkar hinting at, we can ask. Certainly this was not a facile claim to search out those who are personally following ethical lifestyles, rather it is more a call to search for those who are challenging the deep codes of

*Thus it is from the underclass, women, nature, children, and others we can expect alternative visions of the real and the future to come forth.*

the current capitalist (and previously communist system as well) system as well as challenging those religious systems which cease to be consistent with basic human, community and environmental rights.

One way to come to terms with this issue is to borrow the analysis of the Tunisian 14th century philosopher, Ibn Khaldun. For him the key factor in human history is asabiya or the sinews that bind. A people rise in power through struggle with the environment. This is similar to Toynbee's challenge/response hypothesis, in which a creative minority succeeds by meeting various environmental, political, economic or cultural challenges.

For Khaldun, those that had the most unity, here speaking of the 14th century, were the bedouins. They lived outside of official power, offi-

cial descriptions of knowledge and had not been seduced by the sedantary lifestyle of the city - they had retained their moral and physical strength. In more recent times, for Ashis Nandy it is the shaman, outside of official knowledge and outside of official dissent, that can provide the impetus for new social Imaginations.

But for Sarkar, it is the shaman-in-society, living in a mystical world and yet active in society that can create a better society. A shaman, while

avoiding the virus of cynicism, is also

materially inactive and thus unable to understand the vaeshyan and ksattriyan impetuses. But a shaman-in-society in her or himself both challenges current discourses and aids in creating new ones. The question for this period in human history is who are the bedouins, where are the shamans-in-society? Uniting the moralists means uniting these Bedouin-shamanistic forces that exist outside of contemporary power.

In reading Sarkar, we see the world as situated in four types of power - warrior (national militaries and police), intellectual (universities and their religious counterparts, the mosque, temples and churches), merchant (the market place, the transnational corporations) and the underclass (women, nature, children, the aged, the disabled) all existing in the context of an interstate system of nations-the future then at one level will

come from those outside of the official vision of the future. If power, while largely merchant, is currently corporatist in its orientation, with the intelligentsia and warriors providing legitimation and coercive support, certainly we should not expect alternative futures to come from these groups.

Thus it is from the underclass, women, nature, children, and others we can expect alternative visions of the real and the future to come forth. But this is too simplistic a reading. World power works by seducing the poor and weak into believing that they all benefit from the system, that they will one day make it, either through hard work (the Protestant Christian formulation), by following their dharma (the Hindu formulation where they will make it in the next life) or by following their husband, or brother or father (the patriarchal formulation).

Given the naturalness of the capitalist system, it would be rare to gain a unified vision at these lower levels of the world system, certainly rare to find one that can destabilize the entire system. Labor movements certainly to some degree have asabiya but only in the context of nation-states - transnational labor movements do not exist, workers of the world have not united, nor have women or children or the disabled.

The women's movement certainly challenges patriarchy throughout the world. However, since it begins with an essentially sovereign view of gender, it has been unable to unite other movements equally com-

mitted to system transformation. Third World unity has also fallen apart.

East Asians have quickly followed the path of capitalism and having succeeded, barely see themselves as part of the non-aligned movement. Moreover, other Third World nations are either too poor or too concerned with dissent in their home to be concerned with a global movement - they have not yet achieved national sovereignty, so it would be too much to expect them to jetson this ideal for some idea of world culture or progressive planetary civilization.

The world socialist movement is in shatters, with the talk of the second world or the third way being thrown out with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Still some hope might come from the social movements. They are a diverse range of often voluntary transnational movements.

Some of the problems they address are environmental (the ozone, protection of endangered species, and animal liberation groups); others are gender-based (against wife abuse, wife burning, female circumcision and for equal pay and equal rights for women), others are culture-based (against the gross forms of foreign culture as in dolls that reflect only Western culture or movies that deride non-Western cultures, that create homogeneity where there is authentic difference); some of these are concerned about future generations (against short termism in governmental decisionmaking and for providing a voice and forum for future generations not yet

born); some are federalists (arguing for a world government, or a strengthened United Nations).

Others are human rights-based (hoping to eliminate the worse of human rights abuses); some are concerned with minorities (suppressed by each nation); some are focused on governmental corruption (hoping to increase transparency throughout the world); and others are economic (joining together producers and consumers in cooperatives, ethical finance). While the list is almost endless, all hope to reduce injustice and enlarge inclusiveness towards others, be it nature, the future, women, children, and minorities.

They are historically unique in that they are non-governmental, arguing for a global third force focused neither on the prince nor the merchant but on the citizen - a citizen that has rights and responsibilities and is culturally diverse. They take a range of forms from preserving or enhancing the local (as economy, environment or culture) and as national, international and transnational pressure groups fighting for major causes of justice.

Most of these social movements (currently of the 18,000 non-governmental organizations, 1800 are recognized by the UN) are Western, highly participatory, goal oriented, short term and single issue based. They are certainly bedouin in that they are not part of government or state nor of church or academy and they also fulfill our criteria in that they reject conventional definitions of knowledge - they desire to create a new dis-

course. All would agree that a new moral discourse is needed to save the planet and create a bright new future. However, while Prout fits into this mode, it is somewhat different.

Sarkar's movements are unique in that they are: (1) Third World orientated, hoping to be the carriers of oppressed yet also seeing the oppressors in neo-humanist terms (differentiating, for example, the capitalist system and the capitalist, between structure and individual);

(2) Tantric, focused on reinvigorating mystical culture and not necessarily on immediate efficiency (and thus movement members spend a great deal of time in meditation both for their own spiritual growth but also to change the vibrational level of the planet);

(3) Civilizational, meaning based on a historical culture and not intellectually fabricated, that is, fetishizing the modern or the new;

(4) Comprehensive, working on many issues (and not just on the issue of the day) from students' rights, farmers' rights, womens' rights and workers' rights to the prevention of cruelty to animals and plants (and thus unlike the shaman, movement members are socially active, directly concerned with human suffering) and thus synthetic, visioning and creating an alternative future that is not merely anthetical, arising out of an oppositional dialectical need;

(5) Very, very long term oriented.



That is, structures and processes that cannot fulfil their goals for generations ahead (and thus many of Sarkar's categories often make little sense to the present, his vision was temporally broad and deep);

(6) Committed to leadership creation and not just organisational development, thus avoiding the bureaucratic tendency (and thus, the focus on creating leaders that have deep humanistic qualities and not just on the expansion of the movement);

(7) Trans-state oriented, not solely concerned with nation-states and ego-power but acknowledging that there are four conventional types of power - worker, warrior, intellectual, economic - with the challenge to develop processes that create a fifth that can balance these forces.

(8) Morality based, not solely doing the expedient but a willingness to, for example, live in the same conditions as the poor, willing to sacrifice their own needs for those of others, and

(9) Family/Monastic, having a place for both the family and the monk, seeing both as essentially transformative spiritual paths. While certainly social movements have dimensions of the above, they do not possess all these factors (and realistically in terms of the day to day, neither do Sarkar's movements, these are process goals and hopes, which humans strive for).

Moreover, many social movements are co-opted by the State or by liberal campaigns of shallow inclusiveness. Prout, on the other hand, has

been attacked through the jailings of its workers and its founder. Through struggle, sometimes apparently violent, it has shown that it cannot be so easily coopted.

Now what type of individuals might be attracted to Sarkar's movements? From the West, one would expect those disenchanted with the material/industrial/bourgeois way of life. However, many from this category opt not for social/spiritual movements but prefer becoming involved in chemical ways of life or are concerned only with spiritual pursuits - new age types, for example, focused on personal emotional healing or on Alien contact. Those potentially interested in Sarkar's movements would be those who were tired with the material way of life and not attracted to the chemical way of life and had seen some suffering in the world, either through travel or insight that there is social/structural injustice, i.e. - inequity in the world system.

Individuals from the West coming from highly educated and privileged families (that could afford to travel, that gave the children a feeling of material security) would fit into the category of potential Prout and Ananda Marga membership. But these individuals would be rare as most would prefer single issue movements instead of the all-encompassing (in terms of time and commitment required) nature of Sarkar's movements. One might also expect as potential recruits individuals who had become disenchanted with socialist or activist paths, who saw the follies of the communist

option, or who in their activism or social service saw the need for internal transformation.

In the West these would be individuals who had worked in the labor movement or in Peace Corps-type activities and were searching for a spiritual path that was committed to social justice. In the East, however, these assumptions might not necessarily be appropriate. With spirituality as more of a given - especially in India - it would be individuals who were drawn to the mix of activism and spirituality but outside of a strict religious framework.

In India, these would be transformed hindus who had coexisted with Muslims or Christians, had traveled and seen the limitations of a particular tradition and thus became inspired by Sarkar's eclecticism (without giving into to liberalism). Certainly, there is not a huge batch of individuals to draw from. While the Green party - with its emphasis on ecology, gender cooperation, spirituality and deep democracy - would draw from the same group, Sarkar's pool would be less inclined towards anarchy and in that sense more conservative than Green potentials. However, while the pool is small, one does not require millions for social transformation. Leadership creation, after all, and not bureaucracy is Sarkar's mission.

For Sarkar, part of the transformation of individuals is the creation of a new language. Returning to our early point on metaphors, underneath these processes has been Sarkar's effort of creating and using a new language (with some guiding categories such as samaj,

prama, microvita, samadhi, sadhana) and new metaphors (Shiva dancing between life and death) to help be the vehicles of the good society he envisions.

Much of the failure of current politics is that neo-realistic thinking (wherein only states are real, only markets can provide goods and services and we are all autonomous individuals) colonizes our imagination. Sarkar desired to create a new language which could both deconstruct current orderings of knowledge but also provide new avenues of expression in which, for example, the spiritual was not antagonistic to the material; in which reality was seen as having layers; and, wherein the idea of humanity could be expressed in the context of other forms of life.

As a movement Ananda Marga (and to a lesser extent Prout) must also be seen in its cultural context. Its Indian, non-Western and spiritual origination cannot be avoided, indeed, it is its strength. It would be quite impossible for Ananda Marga to succeed if it did not have a historical context, if it could not at some level be civilizationally "remembered."

Ananda Marga must show some similarities to other movements/religions/ways of life, there must be a gateway to entry, some recognizable social and spiritual categories. At the same time, Sarkar's ingenuity is that within his movements are dynamics which allow them to transcend their own cultural limitations.

For example, Indian movement workers must cast off the caste system and many work in non-Indian nations thus learning

about the 'other' (workers/monks from other nations are similarly sent to a nation different than their own). Moreover marriages are encouraged between different ethnicities, again challenging any purity of race or tradition notions. It is a universal society that Sarkar imagined, not India or any particular nation writ large.

As might be expected, humans are not universal. We are racist, sexist and capitalist and certainly Sarkar's Prout and other movements exhibit these categories as well. However, meditation and an institutional culture which looks aghast at such practices provides a dynamic where over the longer term - fifty years perhaps - these contradictions can increasingly be worked out.

To not expect these contradictions would be quite unusual since humans live in a social and political context. The process of struggle with these dynamics - our inner demons - is not outside of Prout or Ananda Marga, but is part of its very essence. This struggle is both meditational (an internal battle), organizational (who gets what authority and recognition) and social (how others are treated). While the goal is the path, at the same time only concern with internal and organizational dynamics avoids individual responsibility and the need to show concrete alternatives, to do something for "the suffering humanity," to use Sarkar's language.

Lastly, it is important to situate Prout in a historical sense.

Glossing human history, we can argue that even while there are cyclical dimensions to history (the rise and fall of varna and of nation), there has been a linear movement towards more rights, towards laying bare power. While this argument is somewhat universal in nature, in this discussion we focus on the European social formation.

It can be characterized as having five structures: The clergy (Sarkar's vipras), the aristocrats (Sarkar's ksattriyas), the bourgeoisie (Sarkar's vaeshyas) and the peasants (Sarkar's shudras). Underneath this structure are the underclass: women, gypsies and Nature.

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While one could focus on the rise and fall of dynasties staying within our structural typology, we can see European history as a succession of revolutions. To name a few critical ones:

- (1) The revolt of the peasants against feudalism (the late middle ages, the 14th century).
- (2) The revolt of aristocrats against clergy (church/state) - wherein church power was contested (modernity).
- (3) The revolt of aristocrats against the king, a constitutional revolution as in the English Glorious Revolution of the 17th century, a process started much earlier with the



Magna Carta in the 13th century.

(4) The revolt of bourgeois against the aristocrats and clergy. This was the French revolution and created the Enlightenment. More recently the revolt of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. This was the Russian socialist revolution of 1917. In Nordic nations this was more of a gradual evolution of labor power, of the welfare state.

(5) Elsewhere, there was the revolt of the peasants against the city. This was Mao Zedong's formula (the argument that the two opposing camps are the city and the rural). Pol Pot took this view to its tragic consequence.

*The purpose of Prout is to create a new leadership which keeps society moving and eliminates the particular nasty expressions of each varna*

(6) More recently (and of course, part of a long term trend) has been the revolt of women against men, against patriarchy in all its forms. (7) The revolt of nature against industrialism. This has been the Green position calling for a limits of technocracy.

(8) The revolt of the Third World against Europe, with calls for Third World solidarity. This decolonization process- the 18th century American Revolution being a much earlier example of this- has eventually led to the revolt of the indigenous against all foreign social formations, calling for the creation of special status for them as guardians of the planet

(9) Finally, the revolt against the nation-state worldview, wherein social movements are finding space to express themselves against the interstate system. Our question then is how does Prout fit into this successive revolution of increased rights?

Sarkar's Prout can be seen as fulfilling and expanding these revolutionary movements, not focused on any particular revolution but attempting to balance them and move them all forward.

(1) Sarkar expands humanism to neo-humanism which struggles against the Enlightenment's human centrism and argues for increased rights of plants and animals - towards global vegetarianism and for a global ecological regime. Like the humanists of the

European 14th century, who helped bring about a renaissance, Sarkar hopes to bring about a new renaissance, but a universal one, that includes all living beings wherein identity is layered- situated in self, other and cosmic consciousness.

(2) Sarkar intends to expand the concept of the magna carta (against the power of the king) into a neo-magna carta and develop a world government with basic human rights; rights of language, rights of religion and right to purchasing power.

(3) Sarkar's economic system is committed to the idea of a maxi-mini wage structure wherein minimum rights are guaranteed and thus he can be seen as fundamentally anti-bourgeois. Land, in particular, is

seen as a common resource, owned by God. While small scale ownership is allowed there are clear limitations on the accumulation of wealth in all its forms.

(4) But while Prout is a type of progressive socialism, it also argues against socialist egalitarianism. Sarkar believes that incentives must be given to those who can create new wealth, ideas and technologies.

(5) Sarkar goes even further than a strict Western feminist as he believes there are biopsychological differences between men and women (that can be transcended, and will most likely dramatically decrease in generations ahead) and he sees the need for women's rights as contextual, as part of the broader struggle against imperialism, nationalism and capitalism and not just as a struggle against men per se. He argues for coordinated cooperation between the genders, with women having their own space in some areas and sharing space with men in other areas. Working together is the common regime with neither gender having the upper hand.

(6) The overall goal of Sarkar is the realization of cosmic consciousness and thus he is against materialism as well as philosophical dualism. He also argues that humanity's dharma or path is essentially spiritual and thus in the long run dismisses the sovereignty of identity outside of the cosmic.

Sarkar's Prout thus continues these historical social revolutions but sees the revolutions of varna (labor, warrior, intellectual and merchant) as cyclical based- each one revolts



against the other when it exploits. The most dramatic is the exploitation by the merchants, which leads to a massive revolution wherein power then concentrates again in another class.

The purpose of Prout is to create a new leadership which keeps society moving and eliminates the particular nasty expressions of each varna. At the same time, Prout has a linear dimension with the future one of increased rights for women and nature (and thus for men as well as they will be less subjected to the trauma of extreme capitalism, male religion and totalitarian communism), for safeguards for the following of one's religion, for the protection of one's language and for protection against the misery of poverty.

Sarkar's goal, however, is not to create a global civil society (which often excludes the spiritual) but a gaia of civilizations, a planetary civilization wherein each culture can express itself in the context of a world governance system.

For Sarkar, the citizen must be a world citizen whose identity is universal- seeing and acting as part of the cosmos. Sarkar expands the idea of the civil from its oppositional definition to include other dimensions of reality. Within the Indian context, Sarkar advances various Indian revolutions as well. He expands Buddha's ancient eightfold path to his own sixteen points; he acknowledges the role of the bhakti movements, making devotion to God the centre piece of his ideology; and he attempts to honor both Tantric and Vedic paths by focusing equalling on Shiva and Krishna as guiding myths.

Sarkar challenges caste, seeing it as cruel and violent but uses varna in his macrohistory. He manages to accede neither to Nehru's industrial revolution nor Gandhi's localism, instead seeking a cooperative people's economy.

Finally, while acknowledging the role of ahimsa at the personal level, he does not accede to extreme Jain positions, rather he argues that force in realpolitik is an appropriate response once all forms of negotiation have been exhausted. Clearly in the Indian context he is an iconoclast. With no space for him, Sarkar has sought to engulf and transform the Indian way of life and thinking. Finally it is important to note that the plan is the process.

For example, Sarkar hopes to create a (1) Planetary civilization through the encouragement of marriage across culture and civilization. (2) A new spiritual culture through his 16 points of spiritual practices as propagated by the Ananda Marga movement. These points include meditation, yoga, personal morality, service to humanity, plants and animals. (3) A new culture through, for example, transforming day to day greetings to the Indian 'namas-car' (I salute the divinity within you) from the more secular, 'hi'. (4) A non-statist and peaceful culture through the celebration of holidays such as children's day and other such festivals that are not tied to the birth of nations and victories of conquerors.

With all these processes in shape, what then of the future? While the first phase of globalism is certainly the globalisation of capital and the globalisation of American culture, Sarkar is hopeful that it is the spiritual and the

moral that will be next wave. The efforts of the various social movements in creating a new global governance system, a stronger civil society is certainly part of this future.

Ultimately Sarkar reminds us that we are not because we shop (market based selves) or because we hate others (nationalism) but because we love and care for others, because we yearn for the divine. History is created by structural and personal forces, but also by the attraction towards the Great, the divine. It is this force that will create a new planetary civilization. Sarkar lived such a vision and his movements are undergoing the arduous task of creating such a vision.

Will they be successful? Hard work, collective action and transcendental grace will be needed as well as faith. As Sarkar once said: "Justice is delayed but never denied."

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